

SITUATION REPORT NO. 23
INCIDENT NO. 97-015
DATE: APRIL 17, 1997 TIME: 12:00 P.M.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: To date, seven people have died as a result of problems created by the winter storm and flooding.
3. DAMAGES: South Fargo residents found themselves in the midst of a flood fight April 16 after rapidly rising flood waters spilled out of the Wild River and traveled overland toward Rose Creek. Subdivisions in jeopardy included Rose Creek, Timberline, Copperfield, Fox Run, and Meadows, located between 40th Avenue South and 52nd Avenue South, 25th Street South and South University Drive. Flood waters were encroaching on I-29 south of Fargo, forcing the closure of the northbound lane.

Latest forecasts for the Red River of the North call for the river at Fargo to crest at 39.5 feet by April 17. At Grand Forks, the river continues to rise as a result of flood waters from Red Lake River in Minnesota. The Red Lake River at nearby Crookston, MN, has exceeded its flood of record by two-tenths of a foot.

The N.D. Highway Patrol reported that the northbound lane of I-29, north of Grand Forks, was closed to light traffic at 8:00 a.m. April 17. Up to 8 ½ inches of water is flowing over the northbound lane. Truck traffic is still permitted on the highway.

In addition to the closures on I-29 in the Grand Forks and Fargo areas, the N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT) reports that roads still closed to traffic include: I-29 at Harwood; N.D. Highway 200 at the Red River Bridge at Halstad; N.D. Highway 127, near Wahpeton; N.D. Highway 18, from South Dakota line to Junction 11; N.D. Highway 11, from the junction of N.D. Highway 127 to the Minnesota line; N.D. Highway 2, westbound passing lane, west of Churchs Ferry, and at Columbia Road in Grand Forks; N.D. Highway 81, in the

city of Minto; and N.D. Highway 66, from Drayton to the Red River. Roads where water is flowing over the roadways include the eastbound and westbound lanes of I-94 near Valley City and various locations on N.D. Highways 1, 3, 11, 13, 19, 56, 81 and 200.

The status of North Dakota rivers and tributaries above flood stage are in the following order: station location, flood stage, today's 8:00 a.m. stage, the 24-hour difference, and flood-of-record level:

Red River

Wahpeton : 10 ft., 18.98 ft., -0.08 ft., 19.2 ft.
Hickson: 30 ft., 37.53 ft., -0.03 ft., no record
Fargo: 17 ft., 39.32 ft., +0.78 ft., 37.3 ft.
Halstad, MN 24 ft., 39.82 ft., +0.08 ft., 39 ft.
East Grand Forks 28 ft., 49.54 ft., +2.05 ft., 48.8 ft.
Oslo, MN 28 ft., (not available), 38.6 ft.
Drayton 32 ft., 38.84 ft., +2.02 ft., 43.7 ft.

Wild Rice

Abercrombie: 10 ft., 24.89 ft., -0.02 ft., 24.6 ft.

Maple River

Enderlin: 6 ft., 11.88 ft., -1.76 ft., 15.4 ft.

Goose River

Hillsboro: 7 ft., 11.86 ft., +0.87 ft., 16.8 ft.

Sheyenne River

Cooperstown: 12 ft., 17.02 ft., -0.31 ft., 18.69 ft.
Lisbon: 11 ft., 15.43 ft., +0.56 ft., 19 ft.
Kindred: 16 ft., 18.94 ft., -0.58 ft., 21.7 ft.
Valley City: 13 ft., 16.98 ft., +0.70 ft., 18.9 ft.

Sheyenne Diversion

Horace: 23 ft., 24.06 ft., -0.18 ft., no record
West Fargo: 16.5 ft., (not available), 21.5 ft.
Harwood: 884 ft., 891.93 ft., +0.04 ft., 890.70 ft.

Souris River

Bantry: 11 ft., 12.8 ft., -0.04 ft., 14.6 ft.
Westhope: 10 ft., (not available), 19.2 ft.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from the first report.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: No change from the first and second reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: In Grand Forks, Amateur Radio Emergency Services is providing television coverage of the flood fight. Members will provide instantaneous audio and video

from all Grand Forks dikes and any trouble spots that may arise. The city of Grand Forks and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will review the video, evaluate the problem and dispatch proper response.

After evacuees and staff members of the Richland County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) became ill, officials decided that the Salvation Army will no longer accept prepared food donations. Food will be prepared on site as a precautionary measure, although there has not been a definitive correlation between the illness and prepared food that had been served.

The Salvation Army will collect nonperishable food items, paper products and cleaning supplies from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. April 19 at the Salvation Army Corps in Bismarck. These items will be taken to flood victims in the Red River Valley.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Governor Schafer announced on April 16 that North Dakotans who are totally or partially unemployed as a direct result of the winter storm and flooding disaster could be eligible for disaster unemployment payments. Job Service North Dakota offices will accept Disaster Unemployment Assistance claims through May 16 from individuals whose ability to work was interrupted on or after March 2. Applicants are asked to provide proof of employment or 1996 W-2 forms. Federal income tax returns are required for self-employed individuals.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) community relations staff members are contacting county emergency managers to determine their county's needs for program information.

Fargo city officials established a temporary command center at Centennial School to coordinate city resources for South Fargo residents, who were sandbagging their homes against flood waters from the Sheyenne and Wild Rice Rivers.

USACE staff members are monitoring dikes and reinforcing trouble spots as the Red River continues to rise. In response to revised forecasts, the dikes have been raised to accommodate projected river increases.

Personnel from U.S. Air Force Base at Grand Forks have joined flood fight efforts along the Red River. Base volunteers have been assisting with diking efforts in Grand Forks. Effective April 17, the base will now assign 500 personnel to assist with the flood fight. Personnel will monitor dikes and staff the temporary shelter that is scheduled to open April 17 at the Grand Forks Civic Center.

Walsh County officials have urged residents along the Red River to evacuate before the river reaches 40 feet. Officials have asked that residents hang white sheets outside their home if they have evacuated. Residents have also been asked to notify the Walsh County EOC that they have left. If they are stranded and need assistance, residents are to hang bright-colored sheets.

N.D. State Radio Communications has made available its communications van to assist with flood fight efforts.

The N.D. State Water Commission state engineer and staff participated in a surveillance flight on April 16 of the Red River Basin, from Lake Traverse on the Bois de Sioux River in Minnesota to Grand Forks. The North Dakota Civil Air Patrol provided aerial support.

The N.D. National Guard continues to support flood fight efforts as part of its "Operation Good Neighbor." As of April 16, the National Guard was addressing 18 missions and had four pending missions. Members had completed 95 missions.

Representatives of the N.D. Division of Emergency Management and FEMA participated in a conference call on April 16 with members of the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives. Issues addressed included available assistance and status of the disaster declaration.

The mayor of Beulah contacted the Division of Emergency Management and offered 6,000 filled sandbags on pallets to other entities in need.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: None at this time.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: North Dakota residents with disaster-related damages can apply for individual assistance programs by contacting the National Teleregistration Center (NTC) at (800) 462-9029.

The Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

The N.D. State Water Commission posts flood-related information on its Internet home page. The address is "<http://water.swc.state.nd.us>". The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a "Water Control Home Page" at "<http://www.ncs-wc.usace.army.mil>". The U.S. Geological Survey's Internet home page address is: "<http://srv1dndbmk.cr.usgs.gov/public/>".

Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director